

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF WASHINGTONVILLE

Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 15, 2024



GOD'S PEOPLE GATHER

Welcome to worship!

We praise God for everyone who joins us in worshiping this weekend.
It is a blessing to worship God as part of a community of faith.

ōHe will stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the Lord,
in the majesty of the name of the Lord His God. And they will live securely,
for then His greatness will reach to the ends of the earth.ö

Micah 5:4

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

ōO Little Town of Bethlehemö

Phillips Brooks

*CALL TO WORSHIP (responsive)

Luke 2:15

Leader: When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another,

People: **“Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.”**

*PRAYER OF ADORATION (unison)

We rejoice with You, loving Shepherd, for the straying sheep that You have saved. We rejoice with You, Seeker of the lost, for the children, more precious than coins, that You have redeemed by coming into the world. Help us to remember, with humble awe, that as we seek You today, You are also seeking us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

*HYMN #231

ōArise, Your Light Is Come!ö

Advent Candle of Love: Break Open! Blessed are the ones who have waited.

Dolores Taylor & Missy Taylor

God always chooses the smallest, the youngest, the weak and the unknown. God chose an unknown unmarried young woman, who said yes to bearing God into this world. God chose her cousin who waited a long time for the fulfilment of promises to bring forth blessings. God chooses us. We are the nobodies, the powerless, the weak of the world, to bring good news for the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, and proclaim that Christ is here, among us, now, and we wait for the reign of Christ to break forth anew in our world and in our lives.

Lighting of the four Advent candles

And you, O Bethlehem: from you shall come the promised one, whose reign shall extend to the ends of the earth. (Micah 5)

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (unison)

Hear, O Lord, our Christmas prayer of confession. The rooms of our lives are crowded; we are slow to make a place for the Christ Child. The skies of our lives are full of neon lights and flashing marquees; it is difficult for us to see the light of God. The airways of our world are filled with the noise of traffic and loud music; it is easy to ignore the message of the angels.

Redeeming God, forgive our lack of wonder, our lack of attention, our disinterest in mystery. Sensitize our souls once more to the wonders of Your love and the miracle of Your presence. Amen.

(silent prayer)

ASSURANCE OF GRACE AND FORGIVENESS (responsive)

Luke 1:68

Leader: Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel,

People: **because He has come to His people and redeemed them.**

*GLORIA PATRI

Avery & Marsh

Glory be to the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

WE HEAR THE WORD PROCLAIMED

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

FIRST READING

Micah 5:2-5a

Pew Bible p. 756

SECOND READING

Hebrews 10:5-10

Pew Bible p. 976

ANTHEM

õCanticle of the Turningö

Rory Cooney

CHILDREN'S TIME

No Strings Attached Puppets

Prayer requests will be collected following The Children's Time

*GOSPEL READING

Luke 1:39-45, 47-55:7-18

Pew Bible p. 831

MEDITATION

Rev. Martha Carlson

WE RESPOND TO GOD

*HYMN #183

“Once in Royal David's City”

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (unison)

Luke 1:46b-48a, 50-55

“My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for He has been mindful of the humble state of His servant. His mercy extends to those who fear Him, from generation to generation. He has performed mighty deeds with His arm; He has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble. He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty. He has helped His servant Israel, remembering to be merciful to Abraham and His descendants forever, just as He promised our ancestors.”

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

IN OUR PRAYERS THIS WEEK ARE: all the people suffering in the Middle East, the people of Ukraine, Amanda, Anne, family and friends of Dawn H., Deborah C., Donnie S., Edd C., FPCW, Harvey F., family & friends of Jill F., Jim P., President Jimmy Carter, Claire & Jack, Kathy D., Kaye B., Linda R., Marietta B., Mary N., Martha B., Nancy B., Natalie C., Peggy W., Sabine P., Sonya H., Sue H., Sue R.- in hospice care, the family of Zachary C., and the men and women in our Armed Forces, especially Marine Riley Bray-Jones, Ashley Sabo-National Guard, Ben Clark-U.S. Navy, SSG Michael Grounds, LC Michael Haub, Airman Frank Terry-Air Force. Also in our prayers this week are: First Church Beacon and First Church Bedford.

THE OFFERING

It is important that we offer ourselves to God, with or without the physical symbols of offering, because it is in the using of our gifts that we serve God.

Financial offerings may be mailed to the church. The church's mailing address is 30 Goshen Avenue, Washingtonville NY 10992.

*THE DOXOLOGY

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow!
Praise God, all creatures here below
Praise God above, ye heavenly host
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

*PRAYER FOR DEDICATION (unison)

Lord God, You have given us Your guidance, Your protection and the gracious gift of Your Son. Here we offer to You these gifts, our tithes, our offerings and ourselves. Please use them to further Your gracious plans, in Your Son's name. Amen.

WE TAKE GOD'S LOVE INTO THE WORLD

*SENDING HYMN #185

ōHark! the Herald Angels Singö

*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE (please be seated)

ōTell Out My Soulö

Dudley Smith

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:

What reputation did Bethlehem have? What was its claim to fame in Micah's time?

How does Micah's prophecy remind us of King David? How does it differ from him?

What does God intend for Christ to offer and why?

What does Elizabeth say about Mary's pregnancy?

What does Mary say about her situation? What does she think God is accomplishing in the baby's birth?

Join the people who are reading the Bible-in-a-year readings. This week's Bible readings are: Sunday: James 5, 1 Peter 1-2; Monday: 1 Peter 3-5; Tuesday: 2 Peter 1-3; Wednesday: 1 John 1-3; Thursday: 1 John 4-5, 2 John; Friday: 3 John, Jude, Revelation 1; Saturday: Revelation 2-4.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Choices to communicate PRAYER NEEDS:

1. Send your prayer requests to Lois via email: lmdb9999@gmail.com. There are currently 42 persons in our e-Prayer Circle who are notified of prayer requests. Cynthia will add names from e-prayer requests to the weekly prayer list.

2. During Sunday worship services, fill out a prayer request card or verbalize your request at prayer time. The cards will be collected immediately following The Children's Time.

God does hear and answer our prayers! Thank you, God!

Prayer requests from worship services and from e-Prayer Circle will be put on our weekly prayer list and remain on the list for 30 days, unless requested otherwise.

Snow Cancellation – Our church cancellation policy during the winter months is to evaluate weather conditions on a case by case basis to determine if church closure is advisable for the safety of our congregation. The church's answering machine will have a message about closure. Our website will have a special notice on the front page. A group email will be sent and phone calls will be made to members of our congregation who do not have computers or do email.

Office hours: Tuesday 3:00-5:00.

Call the manse phone any time at 845-614-0048, or email Martha at revmpc86@yahoo.com or text Martha at 845-260-2273.

The church office (845-496-3814)

will be open only as needed until further notice.

Messages left on the answering machine and emails sent to fpcwashingtonville@gmail.com will be checked regularly.

The church's mailing address is 30 Goshen Avenue, Washingtonville NY 10992.

The church's website is fpcw.makeswebsites.com

The church Facebook page is First Presbyterian Church of Washingtonville.

Questions, comments, discussion group on Facebook is Washingtonville First Presbyterian Church.